

2001 SESSION UPDATE

15TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

LAWMAKERS LOOK TO BACK UP DISASTER DECLARATION WITH ACTION

The governor recently declared a disaster in our state as a result of the current drought conditions. Rainfall is currently running at 58 percent of normal for the year and reservoirs are at half of normal levels.

The fact that we're experiencing a drought is not news to the residents of central Washington. We will be working with the governor and Department of Ecology to offer relief to our farm communities.

Farmers are still dealing with an economic downturn that began in 1997 with the Asian financial crisis. Commodity prices have never recovered and growers are finding it increasingly difficult to compete with foreign producers who operate under less restrictive labor and regulatory standards.

Many sectors within the agricultural community are struggling economically to survive. And now we are concerned about possible restrictions on farmers' agricultural water rights.



LOOKING FOR SOLUTIONS

We are supporting a number of measures that will offer needed relief for our farm families, and we're calling on the governor to support this legislation:

1. Increasing local control over agricultural burning (HB 1034)
2. Making changes/fixes to the state's water law to allow for water transfers and incentives to conserve and use water more efficiently (HB 1832 & HB 1769)
3. Rolling back harmful regulations (e.g., postponement of ergonomics implementation) (HB 1127 & HB 1896)
4. Providing relief to cattlemen whose rangeland is overgrazed by deer and elk (HB 1752)
5. Authorizing the Legislature to amend the new shoreline regulations (HB 1656) and allowing an exemption for agriculture from the Shoreline Management Act (HB 1903 & HB 1947)
6. Improve commodity prices by marketing Washington agricultural products worldwide (HB 1891)
7. Providing more flexibility in the Growth Management Act to help our farmers (HB 1151)
8. Providing much needed tax relief to farm communities (HB 1339, HB 1765, HB 1886, HB 1887, HB 1888, HB 1906, HB 2138, HB 2070)
9. Promoting rural economic development (HB 2056)



REVENUE FORECAST, BOEING DEPARTURE REFLECT COOLING ECONOMY

BUDGET OUTLOOK CALLS FOR CAUTION

The Boeing Company announced recently that it will move its headquarters out of Washington after 85 years in our state. Its departure is a symptom of a regulatory climate that is hurting businesses all over our state. Our farmers and rural communities have known this for years. The only difference is that Boeing can pick up and move, while our farmers and other small businesses must struggle for their survival here.

The silver lining in the Boeing announcement is that it has finally placed the spotlight on our need to address the regulatory excesses of government that can hurt our economy.

The most recent economic forecast released last month shows our cooling economy will result in a downturn in state revenue collections. The forecast shows

that general tax revenues will be down by approximately \$111 million over the next two years.

We are currently engaged in negotiations with our Democrat colleagues on an operating budget for the 2001-03 biennium. We will be working in a bipartisan fashion to develop a responsible spending plan that will protect the taxpayers from unnecessary tax increases, yet address budget priorities.

WE ARE WORKING UNDER THREE GUIDING OBJECTIVES:

1. We will insist on a budget that is sustainable. Available resources must support the programs and services funded by the government – both now and into the foreseeable future. We will not authorize a level of
2. We will protect services for those who truly need government assistance. There is no question government will be required to prioritize. The governor, in his budget proposal, made an earnest effort to cut costs in a number of areas. We may not agree with all of his cuts, but there is room for agreement. We will streamline administrative costs where possible, while protecting public safety, support for the elderly and people with developmental disabilities.
3. We will respect the wishes of voters with regard to all initiatives, including those that call for increased spending (I-728, I-732) as well as those that limit government spending (I-601, I-695).

BUDGET FACTS FOR THE 2001 - 03 BIENNIUM

- The cost of simply continuing current services is \$22.5 billion.
- The added cost of Initiative 732 (mandating automatic teacher pay raises) is between \$328 million and \$433 million, depending on legal interpretations.
- The sharp increase in health care inflation will add about \$1.2 billion in costs to the state this biennium.
- Expected revenue for the 2001-03 biennium is \$22.22 billion.
- The legal spending limit under current law is \$22.2 billion.
- The governor's proposed budget would spend \$22.726 billion.



REP. LISK GREETED A GROUP OF YVC STUDENTS WHO VISITED THE STATE CAPITOL IN FEBRUARY.

REPS. BARB LISK AND BRUCE CHANDLER

ENERGY DEFICIT COMMANDS ATTENTION

Washington families are beginning to pay the price of the energy shortage, and Rep. Chandler is working directly toward solutions as a member of the House Technology, Telecommunications and Energy Committee.

Low-income families and senior citizens are getting hit with dramatic increases in their electric bills. And while we work to get struggling farmers back on their feet and restore habitat for endangered salmon, we are forced to draw down reservoirs to generate more electricity for power-hungry California. Washington families are losing their jobs at manufacturing plants, while farmers and other small businesses are being threatened.

That's why we've asked Gov. Locke and Attorney General Christine Gregoire to file suit against the state of California. We want to recover the cost of soaring electricity rates that our utilities and their customers have been forced to pay, as well as reparations for the damage to our environment and agricultural communities.

We also need long-term solutions. The governor has proposed a number of conservation measures, which we support. But ultimately we need more energy. Over a 10-year period from 1988 to 1998, Washington increased its energy capacity by just 4



REP. CHANDLER IS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE TECHNOLOGY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY COMMITTEE AND WILL BE WORKING ON SOLUTIONS TO THE STATE'S ENERGY CRISIS.

percent. The demand simply has exceeded our generation capacity. We need to streamline permitting and provide incentives to locate and develop new clean, affordable sources of power.

HOUSE APPROVES MEASURE TO STOP CLUBBING OF FISH

The House of Representatives adopted a bill introduced by Rep. Lisk that would stop wildlife agents from clubbing hatchery salmon that are spawning in reaches where they're unwelcome. The adult hatchery salmon have been destroyed when they attempt to commingle in spawning grounds with wild stocks.

House Bill 1286 would end the practice of clubbing surplus hatchery salmon and direct the Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt rules allowing more hatchery salmon to spawn naturally to increase the number of viable salmon eggs.

Millions of dollars are being spent to raise these fish. Our farm communities are sacrificing water they need to grow their crops and landowners have forfeited property on behalf of our effort to protect salmon. It doesn't make sense to destroy them.

If we value these salmon as much as we say we do, then we should make sure we maximize the resource and keep salmon recovery efforts moving forward. These are salmon that have been reared successfully to adulthood so we know the stock is viable. If we can find a use for them, then we ought to make sure we take advantage of that opportunity.

The bill would also establish a method of distributing surplus eggs to tribes, volunteer groups, regional fish enhancement groups, government agencies, and lead entities under the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.

EARTHQUAKE FORCES OFFICE CHANGES

With the Capitol building closed indefinitely, we've been forced to relocate our offices to the adjacent John L. O'Brien Building. Our phone numbers remain the same, however, and we look forward to hearing from you if you have ideas or concerns in your dealings with state government.

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2001 SESSION UPDATE

- Drought response
- Budget facts
- Saving salmon
- Energy solutions



REP. BARB LISK

2001 SESSION UPDATE

15TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Dear friends,

The 2001 legislative session was interrupted briefly by a 6.8-magnitude earthquake, which did significant damage to the Capitol Campus. The Capitol remains closed while repairs are made, and lawmakers have resumed their business in the tight quarters of the adjacent House office building.



**REP.
BRUCE CHANDLER**

Using a hearing room as a makeshift House chamber, lawmakers were acting on bills within a week after the earthquake. We're pleased that we were able to get back to work so quickly, so that we can address such pressing issues as water management, the energy shortage and a difficult state budget.

The earthquake, while disruptive, has helped us focus our efforts and we remain hopeful that we can complete our work in a timely manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barb Lisk".

Barb Lisk
State Representative

Toll-free Legislative Hotline:
1-800-562-6000

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce Chandler".

Bruce Chandler
State Representative